

U.S. Department of Energy

OAK RIDGE OFFICE

ANNOUNCEMENT

3890

September 12, 2006

SUBJECT: BENEFIT PROGRAM REMINDERS

The following reminders are provided to assure that your Federal benefit program choices are administered smoothly and your records remain up-to-date.

BENEFICIARY FORMS

A new designation of beneficiary form is necessary whenever a significant life event change, such as a marriage, divorce, or death of an identified beneficiary, occurs. Employees should also file a new designation whenever a beneficiary's address changes. Failure to do so may mean that the Office of Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance cannot locate the beneficiary and therefore cannot pay the death benefits in a timely manner. This applies also to retirement, unpaid compensation, and Thrift Savings Plan beneficiary forms.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS

You should notify your Human Resources Specialist (HRS) when your child reaches age 22; gets married; loses status as a stepchild, foster child, or recognized natural child; or recovers from a disability that had allowed him or her to be covered beyond age 22, by Federal Employee Health Benefits.

If you are divorcing or having a marriage annulled, your former spouse may be eligible for health benefits under "Temporary Continuation of Coverage" (TCC) or "spouse equity provisions." If your former spouse wants TCC, you and your former spouse share the responsibility for notifying your HRS within 60 days after the qualifying event (divorce or annulment) and supplying the former spouse's mailing address. Within 14 days after your HRS receives the notice, your former spouse must be notified of their TCC rights and the spouse must make an election within 60 days of either the date of the event or the notice. If the HRS is not notified within the 60-day time limit, the opportunity to elect TCC ends.

FLEXABLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS (FSA)

Please continue to send your reimbursable statements to your FSA account for payment. You have a two and a half month grace period ending March 15, 2007, during which you may incur eligible expenses for the 2006 season (money remaining in your account after that date will be forfeited). These expenses must be claimed by May 31, 2007, in order to be paid. This is also a good time to start looking at what expenditures you've had in order to make a decision on how much you should set aside in your account during the upcoming open season (November 13, 2006 – December 11, 2006) that will cover the period from January 1, 2007 thru March 15, 2008. Current participants must re-enroll for the 2007 calendar year. Both current and new participants must enroll at <https://www.fsafeds.com/fsafeds/index.asp>.

EMPLOYEE SELF SERVICE (ESS)

Don't forget to take a moment to verify that your personal, payroll, and training information in ESS is current by accessing the website at <https://mis.doe.gov/ess>. If you have a change of address, you need to make the change in ESS as well as sending an e-mail notification to your HRS.

If you have questions regarding the Federal Employee Benefits program, please contact Cathy Clifton at (865) 576-0680 or Sherry Stotemyer at (865) 576-0669.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Melanie M. Kent". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Melanie M. Kent, Chief
Federal Human Resources Branch